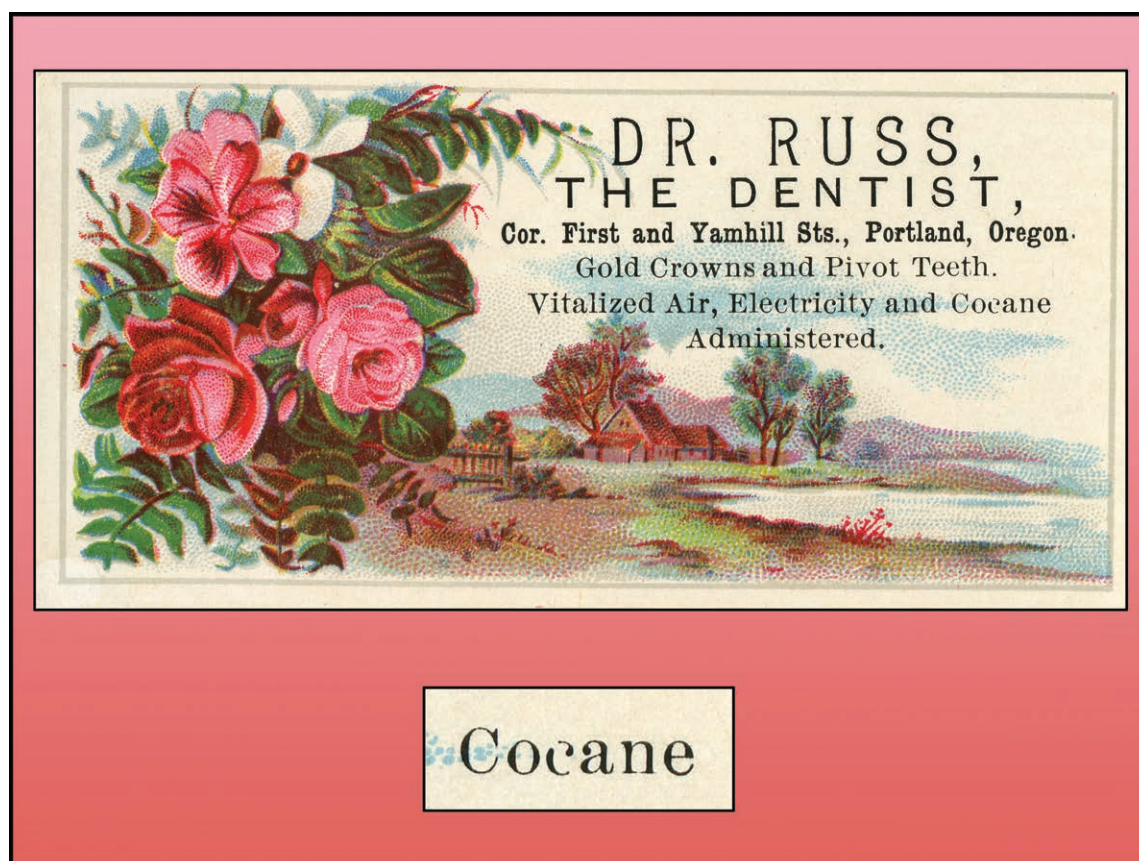


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ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS FROM THE WOOD LIBRARY-MUSEUM

Unhanding Her, Unhanding Him: Explosive Issues beyond Anesthetic Advertising



In Portland, Oregon in 1880, dentist Hiram M. Russ shared an office reception area with his wife, the town photographer. When he mistakenly plopped a well-dressed woman into his dental chair, she demanded that he unhand her, as she was there to be photographed by Mrs. Russ. Hapless Dr. Russ was ridiculed for this episode in the local press. As his dental practice expanded, he preferred to avoid the nausea and flammability associated with ether anesthetics. Indeed, by the 1890s, Dr. Russ had begun advertising his anesthetic use of “Vitalized Air, Electricity and Coca[l]ne” (above). In 1907, a second news story portrayed Dr. Russ in another explosive situation. This time, Dr. Russ suffered crippling injuries while pressurizing a vulcanizer around flammable office chemicals: “One hand was blown from his arm and one of his legs pierced by flying portions of steel.” (Copyright © the American Society of Anesthesiologists’ Wood Library-Museum of Anesthesiology.)

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